

DOTD prepares for 2013 hurricane season

BATON ROUGE, La. – The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) announces its preparations for the 2013 hurricane season, which begins [Saturday, June 1](#).

“The Department is committed to assisting with the evacuation and safety of the traveling public,” said DOTD Secretary Sherri H. LeBas. “Our success during severe weather events is a result of the continued training and readiness of DOTD as a whole.”

Prior to the start of hurricane season, DOTD personnel participate in and conduct state and department-wide hurricane readiness and response exercises, and meet to review and discuss evacuation and contraflow operations.

Recently, DOTD staff participated in a test tornado warning message transmitted the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio on March 6, as well as the Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) drill at the National Guard facility in Carville on April 25. Coordinated by the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), ROC is a mock step-by-step hurricane response exercise that involves all Louisiana state agencies and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Future efforts in preparation for the 2013 hurricane season include involvement in the MSY (Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport) evacuation exercise scheduled to take place May 29-30. State and federal agencies will participate in a simulated exercise involving the evacuation process using commercial aircrafts.

Additionally, DOTD will conduct the Annual Mississippi/Louisiana Contraflow meeting [on May 30, 2013](#) in Hammond, Louisiana. Representatives from DOTD, Louisiana State Police, Mississippi Department of Transportation, Mississippi Highway Patrol, and Florida Highway Patrol will meet to discuss effective operation plans should contraflow be activated.

To maximize response efforts, DOTD has also decentralized many of its response activities to the district level, including vehicle staging areas for emergency evacuation efforts and debris management